

## News Release

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## ITT RAYONIER FINED \$20,000 FOR PERSISTENT POLLUTION PROBLEM

The Department of Ecology has fined ITT Rayonier, Inc., Port Angeles \$20,000 for the negligent discharge of oil into Ennis Creek.

Ecology inspectors first documented oil entering Ennis Creek in October 1989 and advised ITT Rayonier to contain the oil and investigate how it was getting into the creek. An investigation by the company determined that hydraulic fluid under a building located about 30 feet from the creek was the source of the problem.

Since October 1989, the company has kept absorbent booms in the creek to contain the seeping oil.

As part of ITT Rayonier's investigation, nine monitoring wells were installed to determine the extent of the contamination. The oil level in two of the wells was found to be three feet thick.

"It is quite obvious that this pollution problem began many years ago," said Dick Burkhalter, Ecology industrial section supervisor. "Ecology is issuing this major penalty because ITT Rayonier clearly failed to prevent oil from being discharged into the environment."

Although Burkhalter said the violation is considered a case of neglect, he said the company has acted in a responsible manner during the past year to resolve the problem.

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The company installed an oil/water separator in mid 1990 but preliminary indications at that time about the possible presence of PCB compounds in the oil prevented it from being operated. After follow-up test results found no PCB contamination, the system started test operations in December.

Burkhalter said a consent order to formalize the final cleanup plan will be prepared after Ecology assesses the oil/water separator's effectiveness.

The penalty was issued Feb. 5. The fine may be appealed to Ecology and/or the Pollution Control Hearings Board.